

P R E S S

# THE CLASH



March 9 Orpheum Theater

The fact that they may be the best isn't what's so surprising at this point, it's just that now most people are finally finding out about it. They may be the best, but they're still getting better.

Many people around town questioned the band's ethics for playing at the Orpheum, seeing how Joe Strummer said that The Clash would never play for Don Law again, after last September's melee with the Red Shirts. Well, anyone who cried "sell-out!" should have known better, for when show time rolled around, there wasn't one Red Shirt in sight! (And the first 5 rows of seats had been ripped out, assuring people room to dance. However by the time the Clash came on, the area down in front was so crowded, you'd have more room to move if you stayed in the aisle.)

The versatile opening sets featured: The B-Girls performing an embarrassingly amateurish set of Beach tunes. Mikey Dread, a Jamaican D.J. performing some badly received dub reggae, and old war horse Lee Dorsey, belting out some hot R&B.

Although tired from the previous night's set in New Jersey, The Clash showed no signs of fatigue as they hit the stage with a spirited "Clash City Rockers", wasting no time

in between songs, the band struck into "Safe European-Home", and then "Brand New Caddillac". Some things I noticed right from the start, The Clash were getting a Cleaner mix this time than in their previous two Boston appearances. Also, while last time Mick Jones' guitar playing seemed to be the band's only real technical centerpiece, this time everyone showed great improvement, especially Paul Simonon, who now moves around with the confidence of a veteran (Which he now is!). Watching Paul shout "Guns of Brixton" made me realize how less self-conscious he's become.

Joined by Mickey Gallagher for a revamped "Jimmy Jazz" The Clash now had a greater depth with the addition of keyboards, enabling them to do tunes like "Train in Vain" and "Wrong 'em Boyo" as well (if not better) live as they were done in the studio. I myself was surprised that The Clash played so many of the new songs ("Boston Calling") but then again, they also did old ones, like "Janie Jones" and "Police and Thieves".

The show's climax came with "Complete Control", a song that sums up what The Clash have been fighting for all these years—whether it means being allowed to dance at a rock concert, or being shipped off to Afganistan, Angola, or Vietnam. "Are taking order, or are you taking orders? Are you moving backwards, or are you moving forward?" After the show I wondered if anyone has Complete Control anymore (Or did they ever?).

"A lotta people wont get no justice tonight..."

